(d) what steps Government propose to take to tackle the employment problem on war footing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) As per the information collected through Employment Market Information Programme of Directorate General of Employment & Training, the employment in organized sector which was increasing from 1990 till 1997 when it was 282.45 million, has come down to 281.13 million in 1999.

(b) to (d) At the instance of Hon'ble Prime Minister a Task Force under the chairmanship of Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Member, Planning Commission was set up to go into the details of employment generation taking place and suggest measures to create 100 million jobs (10 million each year) over a period of 10 years.

Higher unemployment rates with higher education levels has been persisting for quite some time even before the announcement of the task force. The main reasons for this trend are that the education and skill levels of the educated youth are generally not in tune with the requirements of the labour market.

The report of the task force is being analysed. Further action would depend on the acceptance of the report of the Task Force by the Government.

Changes in labour laws

3450. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has suggested changes in the existing labour laws in view of change in the working pattern on account of information and technology scenario;

(b) if so, the changes sought for and Government's views thereon; and

(c) the action taken to seek opinion of the other State Governments in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) Certain amendment proposals to the I.D. Act, 1947 and Trade Union Act, 1926 have been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh. These proposals have been formulated by the State Government to improve the investment climate and boost up exports from the State. Various amendments to the I.D. Act, 1947 are proposed based on

the requirements of the social partners and in consonance with economic reforms. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has been requested to await enactment of the amendments to this Act by the Parliament. Since the amendment proposals to the Trade Unions Act, 1926 are under consideration of the Parliament, the proposal of the Government of Andhra Pradesh could await the passage of the Bill and its enactment by the Parliament.

(c) Amendment proposals to the Acts referred to above are proposed by the State Government in the specific context of their own requirements and therefore the opinion of other State Governments in this regard is not sought.

Model ESI Hospitals in the States

3451. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to establish Model ESI Hospitals in all the States;

(b) if so, the target set up for this purpose; and

(c) the steps proposed to improve and upgrade the services of the existing ESI hospitals for better care to the workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) The ESI Corporation has decided in principle to upgrade one ESI Hospital as a Model Hospital in each State subject to State Government's consent.

(c) The ESIC has enhanced the ceiling on expenditure on medical care from Rs. 500- to Rs. 600/- per insured person per annum with effect from 1.4.1999. In order to bring improvements in the working of ESI hospitals/ dispensaries, the ESI Corporation has formulated an Action Plan and forwarded the same to the State Governments for implementation in consultation with the ESIC. The Action Plan includes *inter-alia* upgradation/modernisation of medical facilities in ESI hospitals by providing them equipments of ultrasonography, pulse oximeter, autoanalyzer, semi-auto analyzer, cardiac monitor, dental unit, resuscitation equipments etc. Under ESI Scheme tie-up arrangement has also been made for super-speciality treatment with reputed medical institutions in the country. A revolving fund has also been set up by the ESIC with Regional Directors in the States so as to facilitate prompt reimbursement of medical expenditure incurred by insured persons on super-speciality treatment.